

Lateral

Journal of the Cultural Studies Association

August 2020

by Jennifer Scuro | Issue 11.2 (Fall 2022), Crip Pandemic Life: A Tapestry

ABSTRACT Unemployed at the time, not visibly disabled, but having become quite unwell in the middle of a pandemic, this poem illustrates my anxious and exhausting insomnia against the caretaking labor for my youngest child. I worked to minimize the projections of stress and anxiety onto her, laboring for stillness and comfort. As Luce Irigaray states in *An Ethics of Sexual Difference* (1993), "Music comes before meaning. A sort of preliminary to meaning, coming after warmth, moisture, softness, kinesthesia" (168).

KEYWORDS disability, crip, pandemic, poetry, parenting

I'm dreamless these days,
most days.
I wake wearing my cement shoes.
Mornings add slip to the cement.

It is as I twilight
that the nightmares visit.

The roll-out of the a.m.
Insomniac stares.
I catch myself wandering in my cement shoes.

Woke again.
Light cracks through blackout shades.
The baby sleeps next to me.
Delicious.
Too old for mommy's bed,
too young to know this much anxiety.

Woke again.
Still safe.
Still scared of the next part.

The sleeping baby is a mirror of me
yet to be.

Delicious, soft-cheeked.

A starfish

without weights

pulling her own weight

through her turn in the universe.

Mornings do not renew.

It is the plan yet again

in the safety of another dreamless night

to stay alive.

I hear breathing but no birdsong.

She is the music of morning

with her snorts and her sniffles.

Too old to be in mommy's bed,

too young for all this anxiety.

Author Information



Jennifer Scuro

Jennifer Scuro is an Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Molloy University in New York. She is the author of *The Pregnancy ≠ Childbearing Project: A Phenomenology of Miscarriage* (Rowman & Littlefield International, Feb 2017) and *Addressing Ableism: Philosophical Questions via Disability Studies* (Lexington Books, Oct 2017). She is on the Governing Board of the Cultural Studies Association and co-chair of the Critical Feminist and Queer Studies Working Group.

[View all of Jennifer Scuro's articles.](#)

Jennifer Scuro, "August 2020," *Lateral* 11.2 (2022).

<https://doi.org/10.25158/L11.2.18>

This article is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/).
Copyright is retained by authors.

Lateral is the peer-reviewed, open access journal of the [Cultural Studies Association](https://www.culturalstudies.org/).

ISSN 2469-4053